

When your family and primary care provider talk, build trust, and work well together, your child will receive the best health care possible.

For more information  
on a medical home:



State of New York  
George E. Pataki, Governor  
Department of Health  
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How can I get the  
**BEST HEALTH CARE**  
for my child?



**MedicalHome**  
Families & Health Care Providers  
Working Together

### What is a medical home?

A medical home is a way to provide high quality health care services that best meet the needs of children and families. It is not a building, house, or hospital. In a medical home, a primary health care provider and the family work in partnership to assure that all the medical and non-medical needs of the child or youth are addressed.

### Why have a medical home?

Families, especially those who have children with special health care needs, may work with many doctors, nurses, and other health care providers. Often families must also work with school, insurance, and social service professionals. Therefore, families benefit from the team work provided by a medical home.

A Medical Home works together to coordinate health care for children, especially those who have special health care needs.



## Who is the primary health care provider? What do they do to develop Medical Home Partnerships?

The primary health care provider is a pediatrician, a family practice doctor, a nurse practitioner, a physician's assistant, or sometimes a specialist. The primary health care provider is the person who provides your child with comprehensive medical care. It should be someone you trust and will partner with you to:

- \* Answer questions
- \* Share decision making
- \* Communicate with other professionals
- \* Coordinate care for your child
- \* Provide resources and find out how well they worked
- \* Build bridges among families and health, education, and social services
- \* Develop comprehensive plans of care that address your individual child's needs
- \* Develop plans for emergencies
- \* Monitor, update and follow up care planning activities
- \* Respect your values and culture
- \* Promote health and quality of life for your child and family.

## Tips for Families: Developing Medical Home Partnerships

### When you visit your child's primary care provider's office:

- \* Be ready to discuss your child's condition:
  - Keep a journal of responses to treatment, new signs and symptoms, and concerns
  - Keep medical records, including dates/places of visits to specialists, emergency room visits, hospitalizations and surgeries
  - Write out questions
  - Keep the contact information (names, addresses, phone and fax numbers) of all health and community providers.
- \* Prepare your child for the visit by telling him/her what to expect. Take comfort items along to the appointment and discuss appropriate ways a child can express his/her feelings
- \* Share information on how your child is changing
- \* Ask about resources that may help your child and family. If you have identified resources that may help other families, share those resources
- \* Ask about how to get care after hours if needed
- \* Ask to meet the office staff who will be working with you and your child (nurses, referral coordinator, billing person, etc.).

"My daughter with asthma almost failed a year of school because she was absent so much. Then my health care provider began putting a medical home in place. Together we developed an asthma action plan and provided this

information to the school nurse which meant we all knew what to do. Now she misses much less school, I miss less work, and our family has less stress. Good communication among all of us really made a difference."

### In a medical home, your family will feel comfortable to:

- \* Discuss questions or concerns
- \* Share information about your child
- \* Communicate with your doctor, clinic staff, and partners
- \* Ask for things to be explained differently when you don't understand
- \* Seek solutions in a mutually respectful way.

